Qualifiers defined as schemes define rules for constructing a term, date or other type of data in accordance with a controlled list of terms or a specific format of representing a type of data (e.g., dates). Values for schemes are represented through a coding system used in the description of resource. The purpose of the scheme qualifier is to introduce a degree of consistency and standardization into the Dublin Core record and to communicate the standards or controlled vocabularies used in constructing the content of a given element.

HTML Syntax for Dublin Core

These guidelines primarily focus on the implementation of Dublin Core in a World Wide Web environment, although Dublin Core may be effectively applied in other environments. In fact, these implementation guidelines can guide the creation of information in various collection management systems such as CONTENTdm, PastPerfect, Re:discovery, and so on. While the examples included in the guidelines are expressed in HTML <meta> elements, it should not be assumed that the guidelines only apply to HTML.

Below are procedures for the syntactic expression of Dublin Core in the HTML 4.0 standard. The correct syntactic expression is important for the harvesting of metadata information both locally and consortially, but the syntactic requirements of Dublin Core are not complex.

Here is the way a Dublin Core element is written in HTML:

<meta name="DC.[Dublin Core element].[Dublin Core refinement]" scheme="[scheme code]" content="[textual content of the element]">

The **<meta>** tag is used for all Dublin Core elements. All of the information relating to each DC element goes within the <meta> tag.

name refers to the name of the element. This can include just an element's name or an element's name with a refinement. The element name and refinement are separated by a period (full stop). The DC preceding the element name indicates that a Dublin Core element is being used; prefacing all **name** values with DC is required.

Examples of values:

> DC.Title
> DC.Title.Alternative
> DC.Creator
> DC.Coverage.Spatial

scheme refers to the scheme used in formulating the content of the element. Codes are used to identify the schemes. Examples of this are lcsh (Library of Congress Subject Headings) and lcnaf (Library of Congress Name Authority File). Scheme codes are listed in appropriate elements. If no controlled vocabulary or data value standard is in use, the **scheme** can be left out entirely. It should not be entered with an empty value.

Examples of values:

> iso8601
> lcsh
> lcnaf